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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-11 ADS-00 IO-14 TRSE-00 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00  
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 COME-00  
EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 SY-05 SYE-00 MCT-02 CA-01  
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 307  
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
USUN NEW YORK 939  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS CZ

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

[REDACTED] BUENOS AIRES 3107

E.O. 12065: GDS 4/19/85 (HALLMAN, WILLIAM H.) OR-P  
TAGS: SHUM AR  
SUBJ: (U) HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMARY - APRIL 19, 1979

REF: BUENOS AIRES 2931

1. [REDACTED] INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: ARGENTINA'S FOUR DAY  
HOLY WEEK INTERMISSION SLOWED DOWN PROCESSES OF GOVERNMENT  
-- EXCEPT ON THE LABOR FRONT, (SEE BUENOS AIRES 2967) WHERE RUMORS  
OF STRIKE ACTION AND GOVERNMENT  
ATTEMPTS TO BLOCK IT HEATED INTO A SITUATION  
THAT COULD TURN UGLY. OFF THE LABOR FRONT  
THERE WERE A FEW OTHER INDICATORS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS,  
ROUNDED UP BELOW. SEPTTEL REPORTS EVENTS HERE HAVING TO DO  
WITH THE PREDICTED POSTPONEMENT OF THE VISIT TO ARGENTINA OF  
THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS. END

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INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY.

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2. (U) PRISON PROGRESS: GOA WILL INAUGURATE TWO "MODEL" PRISONS THIS MONTH: UNIT NO. 13 IN JUNIN ON APRIL 18 AND UNIT NO. 1 IN CASEROS NEAR BUENOS AIRES ON APRIL 23. THE JUNIN PRISONS, REPORTEDLY ONE OF THE MOST MODERN AND FUNCTIONAL IN THE WORLD, HAS CAPACITY FOR 320 PRISONERS AND CAN BE ENLARGED TO HOUSE 150 MORE. BUILT IN THE SHAPE OF A PENTAGON, THE PRISON HAS FOUR PAVILLIONS OF 40 CELLS APIECE, PLUS A SCHOOL, GYMNASIUM, HOSPITAL, CHAPEL, BAKERY, PASTA FACTORY AND HANDICRAFT WORKSHOPS.

JUSTICE MINISTER RODRIGUEZ VARELA VISITED PRISONS IN THE FAR SOUTH OF THE COUNTRY LAST WEEK, RETURNING TO BUENOS AIRES APRIL 14. COMMENTING TO NEWSMEN ON HIS RETURN, THE MINISTER SAID HE FOUND ESQUEL PRISON IN CHUBUT TO BE IN "EXCELLENT CONDITION."

3. (U) CRIMES OF "ECONOMIC SUBVERSION": INDIVIDUALS WHO DEFRAUD THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE IN THE HANDLING OF FUNDS ENTRUSTED TO BANKS AND FINANCIAL ENTITIES ARE GUILTY OF "ECONOMIC SUBVERSION" AND COME WITHIN THE SCOPE OF (AND ARE PUNISHABLE UNDER) STATE SECURITY LAW 20,840, ACCORDING TO A RULING MADE KNOWN APRIL 18 BY THE BUENOS AIRES FEDERAL APPELLATE COURT IN UPHOLDING THE PREVENTIVE ARREST OF THE HEADS OF A FINANCIAL COOPERATIVE INVOLVED IN A BANKRUPTCY AND FRAUD CASE. THE FEDERAL COURT DECISION OPENS THE DOOR TO MORE SEVERE PUNISHMENT OF THE ACCUSED IF THEY ARE FOUND GUILTY. IN REACHING ITS DECISION THE COURT STATED THAT FINANCIAL IRREGULARITIES CAN BE DEEMED TO BE ATTEMPTS AGAINST THE SECURITY OF THE STATE SINCE THEY ENDANGER PEACE.

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4. (U) TIMERMAN STORY DENIAL: AN OFFICIAL DENIAL WAS ISSUED BY THE CASA ROSADA'S CHIEF OF THE PUBLIC INFORMATION SECRETARIAT OF THE (GARBLED, AS IT ALL TURNED OUT) WASHINGTON POST STORY REPORTED BY THE POST'S BUENOS AIRES CORRESPONDENT CHARLES KRAUSE. THE STORY ASSERTED THAT ACCORDING TO AMBASSADOR CASTRO, PRESIDENT VIDELA TOLD HIM THAT JACOBO TIMERMAN WOULD BE HELD INDEFINITELY. "NOT SO" SAID THE GOVERNMENT. THE PRESS EVENT SET OFF TWO BUENOS AIRES HERALD EDITORIALS ON THE NEED TO RELEASE TIMERMAN, PRINTED APRIL 19 AND 20.

5. (U) RIGHT OF OPTION COMMITTEE MEETING: THE PRESS

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REPORTED A MEETING OF THE OPTION COMMITTEE UNDER THE PRESIDENCY OF MINISTER OF INTERIOR HARGUINDEGUY ON APRIL 17.

6. [REDACTED] STAFFERS AT THE MOVIMIENTO ECUMENICAL DE DERECHOS HUMANOS (MEDH) REPORTED NUMBERS OF REQUESTS FOR LEGAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM MEMBERS OF FAMILIES OF DISAPPEARED AND DETAINED ARGENTINES. MEDH EXECUTIVE SECRETARY JORGE COREA DESCRIBES THIS HEIGHTENED ACTIVITY AS A RESULT OF THE IMPENDING IACHR VISIT, WITH FAMILIES ANXIOUS TO HAVE HABEAS CORPUS PETITIONS IN ORDER. THE MEDH PROVIDES FOOD PARCELS ON A MODEST SCALE TO FAMILIES IN SERIOUS FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

7. (U) ROSARIO TRIALS: FOUR TERRORISTS, ARRESTED IN 1974 IN SANTA FE, WERE RECENTLY SENTENCED TO TERMS RANGING FROM NINE TO THREE YEARS BY A SANTA FE FEDERAL JUDGE. THE FOUR HAD BEEN CHARGED WITH ILLICIT ASSOCIATION

POSSESSION OF ARMS AND PUBLIC "INTIMIDATION." ACCORDING TO THE JUDICIAL DISPOSITION, THE TWO SENTENCED TO THREE AND THREE AND A HALF YEARS HAD COMPLETED THEIR SENTENCES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 24 OF THE PENAL CODE.

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